like the U.K., Germany, Nepal, Singapore, Russia have suffered a steep decline; and

(c) the immediate steps taken to arrest the declining trend?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE): (a) As per the provisional DGCI&S data Indian exports during April-February 1998-99 after taking into consideration late returns, registered a growth of 56% in US $ terms over the corresponding period last year.

(b) As per the provisional Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence and statistics (DGCI&S) data the change in the rate of export growth in US $ terms, during April-January 1998 as compared to the same period last year is as under:—

Country	%age change
U.K.	—12.52
Germany	— 0.17
Nepal	—27.39
Singapore	—35.68
Russia	—23.40

(c) The deceleration of exports is mainly due to South East Asian crisis and world wide recession. A number of steps have been taken to promote exports which include lowering of interest rates on export credit, reduction in transaction cost through decentralisation and simplification of procedures and various other measures as enumerated in the Exim Policy. Steps have also been taken to promote exports through multilateral and bilateral initiatives, identifiction of thrust sectors and focus regions. The Government is also initiating action through several measures to facilitate investment in sectors with strong export potential, encourage diversification of India's export basket, address infrastructure short comings, improve export facilitation measures and thus enhance the overall competitiveness of Indian exports.

The Government is according high priority to exports and all necessary steps are being taken to put exports on high growth trajectory.

Sector-wise Export

2965. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state: (a) whether Government have reviewed that sectoral and State-wise export performance for 1998-99 vis-à-vis previous two years:

(b) if so, the details of emerging trends by broad indicators particularly for agro-sector;

(c) the details of major policy initiatives/incentives export package formulated for 1999-2000 for various sectors alongwith the targets/projections; and

(d) the reasons for sluggish export performance during the last two years and revival plans?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE): (a) and (b) As per the provisional data India's sectoral export performance including agricultural sector during April-January, 1996-97, 1997-98 and 1998-99 are as under:

Sector-wise details of exports for April-January

US $ Million

Commodities	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99
Plantations	557	688	756
Argi. & Allied Products	3722	3377	3224
Marine Products	949	1003	884
Ores & Minerals	922	870	692
Leather & Manufactures	1338	1251	1297
Gems & Jewallery	3842	3973	4523
Sports Goods	66	64	59
Chemicals & related products	3334	3637	3362
Engineering goods	3162	3453	3061
Electronics (Hardware)	659	614	386

Commodities	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99
Project goods	40	65	36
Textiles	6507	6824	6737
Handicrafts	398	443	524
Carpets	488	464	421
Cotton raw including waste	337	212	44
Petroleum products	401	310	86

SOURCE: DGCI&S

State-wise export data are not being compiled by DGCI&S.

(c) Major policy initiatives for some of the sectors include reduction in transaction time and cost through electronic processing of applications and annual advance licences for duty free imports; relaxation of various restrictions on units functioning in Export Processing Zones; recognition of services sector exports; special facilities for certain sectors such as chemicals, plastics, textiles, leather, gem and jewellery, handicrafts etc. and removal of quantitative restrictions on a large number of items.

No specific sector-wise targets have been fixed.

(d) The deceleration of exports is mainly due to South East Asian crisis and world economic recession. A number of steps have been taken to promote exports which include lowering of interest rates on export credit, reduction in transaction cost through decentralisation and simplification of procedures and various other measures as enumerated in the Exim Policy.

Export Growth

2966. SHRI W. ANGOU SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the measures for imporvement of export grwoth;

(b) the names of goods which are more in demand from our country; and

(c) whether the benefits would be extended to the manufacturer exporters?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE): (a) to (c) The major export products of India in terms of value are Textiles including garments gems & jewellery, agri. & allied products, chemicals & related products and engineering goods.

A number of steps have been taken to promote exports which include lowering of interest rates on export credit, reduction in transaction cost through decentralisation and simplification of procedures and various other measures as enumerated in the Exim Policy. Steps have also been taken to promote exports through multilateral and bilateral initiatives; identification of thrust sectors and focus regions. The Government is also facilitating investment in sectors with strong export potential, encouraging diversification of India's export basket, address infrastructure short comings, improve export facilitation measures and thus enhance the overall competitiveness of India exports. The Government is according high priority to exports and all necessary steps are being taken to put exports on high growth trajectory.

All the benefits available to the exporters under the Exim Policy are extended to the manfuacturer exporters also.

Advisory Committee on International Trade

2967. SHRI ABANI ROY:
SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government had constituted an Advisory Committee on international trade;

(b) if so, the composition and terms of reference of the Committee; and